

Ephraim United Order Mercantile Institution
(Ephraim Co-op Building)
Main & First North Sts.
Ephraim
Sanpete County
Utah

HABS No. UT-106

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS..

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

EPHRAIM UNITED ORDER MERCANTILE INSTITUTION
(EPHRAIM CO-OP BUILDING)

HABS No. UT-106

Location: Southeast corner of Main Street and First North, Ephraim, Sanpete County, Utah

Present Owner: Sanpete Development Corporation

Present Use: Vacant

Statement of Significance: This building is one of the few remaining examples of a Mormon Cooperative store in Utah. Stores like this one were founded throughout Utah Territory in the 1860's and '70's for reasons of economic self-sufficiency by providing an outlet for local goods and commodities. Constructed of Sanpete limestone in 1872, the second floor of the structure served as a meeting place for various civic and educational functions related to the town of Ephraim.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1872
2. Architect: Not known
3. Original and subsequent owners:

The Ephraim United Order building is located on the northwest corner of lot 5, Block 21, Plat A of the Ephraim City Map. The following references to the title of this lot are found in the Sanpete County

Recorder's Office, County Building, Manti, Utah:

- 1872 Deed, signed January 1, 1872, filed January 18, 1872, recorded in Book 2, page 252. Trustee of the Ephraim Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints bought from Ephraim City all of lot 5 for \$10.00.
- 1885 Deed, signed February 13, 1885, filed February 26, 1885, recorded in Book A19, page 39. Ephraim Mercantile Coop Institution bought from Trustee of Ephraim Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints all of lot 5 for \$5.00.
- 1887 Deed, signed April 7, 1887, filed April 7, 1887, recorded in Book A16, page 636. Ephraim South Ecclesiastical Ward bought from Canute Peterson, Church Trustee, part of lot 5 for no money.
- 1897 Deed, signed February 27, 1897, filed March 11, 1897, recorded in Book 31, pages 91-93. Junction Coop bought from E. C. Willardson part of lot 5 for \$2.00.
- 1902 Deed, signed February 3, 1902, filed April 28, 1903, recorded in Book 47, page 121. Mons Nielson bought from Peter Sundvall for Junction Coop part of lot 5 for \$1400.00.
- 1905 Deed, signed May 10, 1905, filed January 23, 1911, recorded in Book 58, page 588. John Sorenson bought from Christian A. Sarsen part of lot 5 for \$1.00.

- 1913 Deed, signed November 14, 1913, filed November 15, 1913, recorded in Book 60, page 54. P. M. Peterson, Jr. bought from John Sorenson part of lot 5 for \$2.00.
- 1934 Deed, signed May 8, 1934, filed May 10, 1934, recorded in Book 91, page 56. Evan C. Erickson and Vera Erickson bought from P. M. Peterson part of lot 5 for \$1.00.
- 1944 Deed, signed July 5, 1944, filed July 18, 1944, recorded in Book 96, page 636. Inez Hermansen bought from Evan C. Erickson part of lot 5 for \$4,200.00.
- 1948 Deed, signed September 17, 1948, filed September 17, 1948, recorded in Book 105, page 150. Ephraim Milling and Elevator Co. bought from Inez Hermansen part of lot 5 for \$1.00.
- 1966 Deed, signed June 30, 1966, filed October 31, 1968, recorded in Book 139, page 640. Bank of Ephraim bought from the Ephraim Milling and Elevator Co. part of lot 5.
- 1970 Deed, signed January 30, 1970, filed February 2, 1970, recorded in Book 145, page 418. Sanpete Development Corporation bought from Bank of Ephraim part of lot 5.
4. Original plans, Construction, etc.:
- There are no plans of this building. The structure

housed the United Order Mercantile Institution on the main floor and a recreation hall and meeting place for the Relief Society on the second floor.

The building is constructed of locally quarried Sanpete limestone. The main entry was in one of the three bays of the west gable end of the structure which faces Main Street. The surface of this facade is of finely dressed ashlar limestone, while the other exterior wall surfaces are of coursed rubble limestone. Above the three main floor bays are window openings in which originally set 12 over 12 double hung windows. In the gable above the row of windows is a semi-circular crest which originally contained a representation of a beehive and the phrase "Holiness to the Lord." The gable itself is framed with a bracketed, boxed cornice and frieze.

5. Alterations and Additions:

Addition: stone masonry storage room added to the rear of the structure between 1872 and 1892. The rear addition at some date was made into living quarters with the addition of window and door openings on all three facades.

The following series of alterations took place in the late 1940's when the building was converted for use as a granary:

Main facade: a. first floor bays were bricked

b. second floor windows were bricked

South facade: a. windows bricked

b. exterior stairs to the second floor
were removed

c. exterior chimney was added

Roof: Aluminum standing seam roof was added
over the original cedar shingles.

Plan: The original plan is not available and
during the building's subsequent history
as a granary the spaces have been altered
with the addition of various bins, par-
titions and grain equipment.

B. Historical Events and Persons connected with the Structure:

This United Order Mercantile Institution was patterned after the parent company, Zions Co-operative Mercantile Institution, or Z.C.M.I., in Salt Lake City. For reasons of economic self-sufficiency these stores provided an outlet for local goods and commodities. Thus, the Mormon Brethern avoided having to rely to a great extent on imported or "gentile" products. This Mormon cooperative retail effort ultimately failed often due to poor management and too liberal a credit policy (Arrington, p. 313). Co-ops declined in the 1880's and the Ephraim Institution was purchased by private individuals and operated as the Junction Co-op. At the turn of the century it was used as a meeting place for the Latter-day Saints High Council.

In 1888 the second story which formerly functioned as the Women's Relief Society meeting place was used as classroom space by the newly founded Sanpete Academy. The Academy was the forerunner of the present Snow College, a state liberal arts college.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

a. Deed Books: Sanpete County Recorder's Office,
Sanpete County Building, Manti, Utah.

b. Old Views:

ex: view of the Ephraim United Order Mercantile Institution showing the main (west) facade and north facade and the Relief Society Granary to the south. Utah Historical Society Photo Collection, Salt Lake City.

2. Secondary sources:

a. Books: Arrington, Leonard J. The Great Basin Kingdom. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958.

Lever, W. H. History of Sanpete and Emery Counties. Ogden, Utah: W. H. Lever, 1898.

Nelson, Lowry. The Mormon Village. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1952.

b. Pamphlets, booklets, newspaper clippings, etc.:
Sanborn-Perris Map, Ephraim, Sanpete County,
September 1892.

Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Sanpete County, comp.
These . . . Our Fathers: A Centennial History
of Sanpete County from 1849 to 1947. Springville,
Utah: Daughters of Utah Pioneers, 1947.
Deseret Evening News, November 18, 1872, p. 2.
Nelson, Lowry. "The Utah Farm Villages of Ephraim."
Provo, Utah Brigham Young University, 1928.

Prepared by: Peter L. Goss, Ph.D.
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November 1975

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Federal/Greek Revival Style
2. Condition of fabric: Poor. Building has been extensively changed to accommodate different functions.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 64'-10" x 35'-1"
Addition: 36'-0" x 30'-3"
2. Foundations: limestone (whitestone)
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Limestone, cut-stone, coursed, front elevation trimmed edge with stippeled center, quoins at all corners. White sides and rear have cutstone, coursed.
4. Structural system, framing: Stone masonry wall bearing, wood beams and joists (1st and 2nd floor) wood trusses and rafters at roof, log columns (basement and 1st floor).

5. Chimneys: Limestone (2 at east and west ends); brick (1 on south side) added ca. 1882-1892.
 6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Front entrance remodeled with all openings bricked up.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Double-hung wood, splayed jambs with 2 piece pine casing, stool and apron along sides, 2nd floor front windows bricked up - label type head with molded trim and decorated lug sill.
 7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Medium gable with boxed cornice with brackets, wood shingles covered with aluminum ribbed panels.
- C. Description of Interior:
1. Floor plans:
 - a. Basement: Partial (east end), log columns with brick floor, divided into two rooms.
 - b. First floor: West entrance leads into a single retail sales room. This room has had all log columns removed and walls erected to create storage bins. A platform exists across the east end of the building. Stairs located in the northeast corner serve both the basement and the second floor.
 - c. Second floor: Original exterior staircase on the south side (demolished) led into a single multi-

purpose room. Present enclosed interior staircase from the 1st floor is located in the northeast corner of the building. A storage bin has been erected in the middle of the room while the floor has been removed across the west end. Stairs located in the southeast corner serve the attic (truss space).

d. Attic: Truss space - unoccupied except for access to storage bins.

2. Stairways: Exterior stairs demolished. New interior stairs (northeast corner), enclosed, lead to second floor and early enclosed stairs to basement.
3. Flooring: Solid board, 1 x 8 pine.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: First floor ceiling, 1 x 8 T & G pine with plaster on masonry walls, cove molding at ceiling and wall intersection; plaster on second floor ceiling.
5. Doorways and doors: Demolished
6. Trim: Pine
7. Hardware: Missing
8. Heating: No indication remaining other than chimneys above roof line.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Building faces west on a corner site, adjoining building demolished, granary beyond extant.

2. Addition: Stone addition, 36'-0" x 30'-3", located on the east side was originally constructed for storage; presently remodeled into an apartment.

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Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
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PHOTOGRAPHS

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